

Report to Council

9th February 2022

By Robert Laban, Head of HR&OD

DECISION REQUIRED

Not Exempt



Appointment of the Permanent Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service/ Returning Officer & Electoral Registration Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the appointment of the Horsham District Council Chief Executive and to appoint the statutory duty positions of Head of Paid Service, a Returning Officer and an Electoral Registration Officer for the District.

Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- i) note the Employment Committee nomination of Jane Eaton as the new Chief Executive;
- ii) agree the appointment of Jane Eaton to the position of Chief Executive of Horsham District Council with effect from 16 April 2022, at a salary of £120,264 p.a. (subject to national cost of living award);
- iii) agree the designation of Jane Eaton as Head of Paid Service of Horsham District Council under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, with effect from 16 April 2022;
- iv) appoint Jane Eaton as the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer for Horsham District, with effect from 16 April 2022.

Reasons for Recommendations

- i) To comply with the provision of Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of the appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
- ii) To comply with the requirement of the Representation of the People Act 1983, namely Sections 8, 28(1), 35 and 52(2) respectively, in relation to the appointment of the Council's Returning Officer, and Electoral Registration Officer.

Background Papers: None.

Wards affected: All.

Contact: Robert Laban, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development,
01403 215406

Background Information

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Following the announcement that the current Chief Executive Glen Chipp to retire on 15 April 2022, the Leader instructed that a recruitment process commence, in line with the process set out in the Constitution.

3 Details

- 3.1 The Employment Committee was established for the Chief Executive appointment and recruitment consultants Solace in Business were appointed to help manage the process.
- 3.2 Advertising started on 2 December 2021 internally and externally on relevant websites, in print and executive search.
- 3.3 A total of 16 applications were received by the closing date on 20 December 2021, of which nine were longlisted for technical interview by a Solace Assessor, of which five candidates were shortlisted subsequently, of which two withdrew. Employment Committee members received assessment reports of the candidates and advice from Solace in Business throughout this process.
- 3.4 The shortlisted candidates carried out a range of psychometric tests on-line and attended a virtual assessment centre, which involved “Fact Find” and “In-tray” exercises.
- 3.5 The Employment Committee met for the final interviews with the three candidates on 25 January 2022. Candidates also gave a presentation to Councillors and Heads of Service, who provided feedback via a questionnaire.
- 3.6 The Employment Committee, in deciding upon its preferred candidate, considered the Assessment Centre Report and feedback from the presentation, and agreed to nominate Jane Eaton as the new Chief Executive. The minutes of the Employment Committee are attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Following the Committee reaching its decision, the Members of the Cabinet who were not on the Employment Committee were informed of the decision on 27 January 2022, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, which requires that the Cabinet be given the opportunity to raise an objection to the appointment. No objections were received.
- 3.8 A summary of Jane Eaton’s career history is attached as Appendix 2.

4 Details of the Employment and Implications

- 4.1 Under the statutory guidance in Section 40 of the Localism Act 2011, elected Members are to be given an opportunity to vote on salary packages upon appointments of a threshold of £100,000 or above. The proposed salary package is £120,264 p.a. (fixed point), which is the current level for this post, as was advertised, plus a vehicle allowance of £760.

- 4.2 The Council is required to comply with the provision of Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of the appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
- 4.3 The Council is also required to comply with the requirement of the Representation of the People Act 1983, namely Sections 8, 28(1), 35 and 52(2) respectively, in relation to the appointment of the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.
- 4.4 The process followed for the appointment has been in line with the Council Constitution.
- 4.5 A conditional offer of employment was made to Jane Eaton and accepted.

5 Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7 Resource Consequences

- 7.1 There are no additional resource consequences.

8 Legal Considerations and Implications

- 8.1 Legal requirements have been complied with, as listed in section 4. In addition, Members of the Cabinet who were not on the Employment Committee have been informed of the decision in accordance with the *Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001*, which requires that the Cabinet be given the opportunity to raise an objection to the appointment. There were no objections.

9 Risk Assessment

- 9.1 Not applicable.

10 Procurement implications

- 10.1 Following an invited quotations procurement process, Solace in Business Ltd. was selected to support the recruitment process, advertising, executive search and assessment centre.

11. Equalities and Human Rights implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

- 11.1 Equality legislation was fully observed throughout the recruitment process.

11.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not applicable.

12 Environmental Implications

12.1 Not applicable.

13 Other Considerations

13.1 GDPR/Data Protection does not apply in respect of salary details, as salaries of senior staff are subject to being published under the open data, transparency and accountability agenda; there are no other considerations.